

CLAIMS:

1. A method of determining whether an encoded signal (4) has been encoded with a particular type of encoder (21), the method comprising the steps of:

- receiving at least a part of said encoded signal;
- decoding (11) the received signal using a decoder which performs the reverse operation of said particular type of encoder;
- deriving a fingerprint (12) from the decoded signal;
- comparing (13) said fingerprint with fingerprints stored in a database (14); and
- concluding that the encoded signal has been encoded with said particular type of encoder if the derived fingerprint corresponds to one of the fingerprints stored in the database.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said steps are performed by a server (1) which receives the encoded signal from a client (2) through a network (3).

3. A method as claimed in claim 2, further comprising the step of awarding (22) the client if the server concluded that the received encoded signal has been encoded with said particular type of encoder.

4. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein said step of awarding comprises retrieving from the database metadata associated with the signal, and transmitting said metadata to the client.

5. A server station (1) connected to a network (3) for receiving encoded signals from a client (2), the server station comprising:

- a database (14) for storing one or more fingerprints identifying respective multimedia signals (4);
- a decoder (11) for decoding an encoded signal received from said client, the decoder performing the reverse operation of a particular type of encoder (21);
- means (12) for deriving a fingerprint from the decoded signal;

- processing means (13) for comparing said fingerprint derived from the decoded signal with fingerprints stored in said database, and concluding that the received encoded signal has been encoded with said particular type of encoder if the derived fingerprint corresponds to one of the fingerprints stored in the database.

5 6. A server station as claimed in claim 5, further comprising means for awarding the client if the server concludes that the received encoded signal has been encoded with said particular type of encoder.

7. A server station as claimed in claim 6, wherein said awarding comprises
10 retrieving from the database metadata associated with the signal, and transmitting said metadata to the client.

8. A computer program product for instructing a processor (13) to carry out the method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4.